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BUILDING A DEMOCRATIC STATE
IN MODERNIZING TAIWAN:
THE 2001 LEGISLATIVE ELECTION
AND THE PUSH FOR PLURALISM

Wen-hui TSAI and George P. Chen

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I. INTRODUCTION

Democracy has been hailed as the dream by people in third world nations for it symbolizes freedom of expression and human dignity. But students of comparative politics and cross-national development are well aware of the difficult road a nation takes when traveling from autocracy to democracy. Evidences from Africa, Southeast Asia and Latin America have all pointed to the outbreak of civil disobedience and violence as part of the process of democratization.¹ Although there were a few disturbances in the past under the rule of CHIANG Kai-shek and CHIANG Ching-kuo, Taiwan had enjoyed political stability and peaceful succession of political leadership under the two Chiangs.² The election of LEE Teng-hui after the death of CHIANG Ching-kuo in 1996 to the presidency through a direct vote by the populace was the turning point of the transition of Taiwan from authoritarianism to democracy and the successful transformation from LEE Teng-hui to CHEN Shiu-bian after the March 2000 second direct presidential election further shows the maturity of Taiwan's democracy.

This essay will analyze the two elections held on December 1, 2001: the election of the Legislative Yuan members and the election of county magistrates and city mayors. The bulk of the analysis will, however, be on the election of the Legislative Yuan members due to its significance in shaping Taiwan's political culture and the effectiveness of the new administration in the future. The essay will start with a brief discussion of the difficulties President CHEN Shui-bian faced during his first year of administration and the significance of the December 2001 election to him and his party, the Democratic Progressive Party (commonly known as DPP). Then, election re-

1. For reference, see Philip McMichael, *Development and Social Change*, 2nd edition, Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 2000; Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991; John Markoff, *Waves of Democracy*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, 1996; Craig Calhoun, *Neither Gods nor Emperors: Students and the Struggle for Democracy in China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994; Arturo Valenzuela, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile*, Baltimore: John's Hopkins University Press, 1978.

2. Wen-hui TSAI, *In Making China Modernized; Comparative Modernization between Mainland China and Taiwan*, 2nd edition, Baltimore: Maryland Series in Contemporary Asian Studies, University of Maryland School of Law, 1996; Winston L. YANG and Deborah A. Brown, eds., *Taiwan and Mainland China Toward the Twenty-first Century*, New York: Center of Asian Studies, St. John's University, 1998; Thomas J. Bellows, ed., *Taiwan and Mainland China: Democratization, Political Participation and Economic Development in the 1990s*, New York: Center of Asian Studies, St. John's University, 2000.

sults from December 1, 2001 will be statistically analyzed, assessing the ups-and-downs of each political party. Finally, the implications of this election on the remaining two years of Mr. Chen's presidency and the future of Taiwan's political development will be discussed. Winning this legislature election becomes necessary.

II. THE MAKING OF A NON-KMT PRESIDENT: THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF MARCH 2000 AND ITS AFTERMATH

To people in Taiwan, the election of Mr. CHEN Shui-bian to the presidency of the Republic of China on Taiwan on March 18, 2000 is a great historical landmark in Taiwan's push toward political democracy. The magnificent election result has not only changed Taiwan's political landscape by dramatically ending a half-century of Kuomintang rule as one newspaper headline read: "Once Mighty Kuomintang Suffers Humiliating Defeat,"³ but also has sent a shock wave to countries in Asia, especially the People's Republic of China on the Chinese mainland where demand has been increasing for political decentralization. In his Inauguration speech given on May 20, 2000, the new president declared:

On the eve of the 21st century, the people of Taiwan have completed a historic alternation of political parties in power. This is not only the first of its kind in the history of the Republic of China, but also an epochal landmark for Chinese communities around the world. Taiwan has not only set a new model for the Asian experience of democracy, but has also added an inspiring example to the third wave of democracy the world over. The election for the 10th term president of the Republic of China has clearly shown the world that the fruits of freedom and democracy are not easy to come by. Twenty-three million people, through the power of determined will, have dispelled enmity with love, overcome intimidation with hope, and conquered fear with faith.⁴

Mr. Chen is a member of the opposition party, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP hereafter). His climb to the presidency is a clear demonstration of the growth of a grass-roots movement in

3. Hsin-hsin YANG, "Once Mighty Kuomintang Suffers Humiliating Defeat," *The China Post*, March 19, 2000, p. 4.

4. CHEN Shui-bian, "Inauguration Speech: Taiwan Stand Up: Advancing to an Uplifting Era," available at <http://publish.gio.tw/FCJ/past/00052621.htm1>, p. 1.

Taiwan after the death of CHIANG Kai-shek and CHIANG Ching-kuo. Mr. Chen came from a poor family in rural Tainan County and was the only presidential candidate in the election without a foreign education. Mr. Chen had a reputation of toughness and fairness during the days when he served as a Taipei City councilor, as a member of the Legislative Yuan and as the Mayor of the capital city of Taipei. The victory in the Year 2000 presidential election is hailed as a new beginning of a free and prosperous Taiwan.

Unfortunately, from the first day of his new administration, Chen faced two tremendously troublesome obstacles: his small margin of victory in the presidential election and a hostile legislature still controlled by Kuomintang (KMT hereafter) members. The bad feelings between the KMT legislature and the administration were manifested in many fights in the Legislative Yuan. One news magazine reports, "The legislature changed the Cabinet's version of a bill to shorten the working week and did so in such a way as to pose a threat to local industry. It then revamped the executive's proposals for a senior citizens' welfare provision, making it prohibitively expensive in the process."⁵

1. A Government With No Majority

CHEN Shui-bian won the presidential election by a slim margin. The final result of the Year 2000 presidential election shows that Mr. Chen from the DPP won the election by receiving 39.30 percent or 4,977,737 votes of the total votes. The sitting vice president, Mr. LIEN Chan from the incumbent Kuomintang received only 23.10 percent and placed a distant third, while the independent candidate, James Soong, had a 36.84 percent share of the votes.⁶ Chen led only by 312,805 out of a total of 12,664,393 votes or 2.46 percent. Table 1 shows the regional distribution of the votes in the election.

Analysis of votes after the election showed that Mr. Chen won the election through a strong support from the southern region of Taiwan. In the city of Kaohsiung, Taiwan's second largest city and the largest seaport in southern Taiwan, Mr. Chen's votes were

5. "Loyal Opposition," *Taipei Review*, September 2000, p. 1.

6. For a thorough analysis of the year 2000 presidential election, see Deborah A. Brown, ed., *Taiwan's 2000 Presidential Election: Implications for Taiwan's Politics, Security, Economy, and Relations with the Mainland*, New York: Center for Asian Studies, St. John's University, 2001; Yu-lung LING and Yeong-Kuang GER, "The Great Show-down: Taiwan's Presidential Election in the Year 2000," *American Journal of Chinese Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (April 2000), pp. 1-28.

**TABLE 1. VOTE DISTRIBUTION IN YEAR 2000
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION**

Geographical Regions	Number of Votes			
	Soong	Lien	Chen	Others
Metropolitan Municipals				
Taipei City	631,538	347,564	587,465	10,599
Kaohsiung City	259,023	208,544	398,381	3,980
Taiwan Providence				
North-Northwest Region	1,115,864	587,377	974,352	16,452
North Central Region	790,837	378,541	517,214	35,491
Central Region	932,158	565,933	904,026	13,752
South Central Region	243,851	210,256	412,351	4,303
South-Southeast Region	652,376	612,736	1,147,738	12,172
Offshore Islands				
Penghu	17,723	10,418	16,487	183
Kinmen	19,991	3,543	749	142
Machu	2,362	787	58	15
Total	4,664,392	2,925,513	4,977,737	96,211
% of Vote share	36.84%	23.10%	39.30%	0.76%

(Source: *China Times*, March 19, 2000, p. 11; *United Daily*, March 19, 2000, p. 2.)

nearly double those of the KMT's Lien and 16 percent more than those received by the independent candidate, Mr. Soong. In the majority of the regions in the south, Mr. Chen was the clear choice of voters. Although Soong had a lead in the north, the large number of votes Mr. Chen gathered in the south was able to make up for the discrepancy and gave Mr. Chen a victory.⁷

Realizing the narrow margin of his winning the presidential election, Mr. Chen called for support from all citizens. In his presidential Inauguration speech, President Chen declared his intention to be a "president for all people. He stated,

The spirit of "a government for all people" lies in the fact that "the government exists for the people." The people are the masters and shareholders of the state. The government should rule on the basis of majority public opinion. The interests of the people should reign supreme over those of any political party or individual."⁸

7. Brown, *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

8. See "Inauguration Speech; Taiwan Stands Up: Advancing to an Uplifting Era," available at p. 6.

Nevertheless, the die-hard KMT members and the supporters of Mr. Soong refused to accept the defeat gracefully. They claimed Mr. Chen did not have the mandate to rule, for more than half of the voters did not vote for him and vowed not to cooperate with Mr. Chen. Without the cooperation from the two opposition parties, Mr. Chen's presidency faced a rough road ahead.⁹

2. The Legislative Yuan under the Kuomintang Control

The majority party in the Legislative Yuan, which is the national law making body, was the KMT. The current members of the Fourth Legislative Yuan were elected in December 1998. The ROC's Fourth Legislative Yuan was to have 225 seats, of which 176 were to be elected from the special municipalities, cities, counties and aboriginal communities throughout Taiwan. Some 403 candidates had registered to compete for seats in the lawmaking body. The remaining 49 legislative seats were to be distributed among the parties according to their final vote shares. Among these were 41 national constituency seats and eight representing overseas Chinese. Table 2 shows the results in the election of the members of the Legislative Yuan in December 1998.

**TABLE 2. THE ELECTION RESULTS OF THE
LEGISLATIVE YUAN MEMBERS, 1998**

	Political Parties			
	KMT	DPP	NP	Others*
Elected Seats				
Seats Won	96	52	7	18
% of Votes	43.43	29.56	7.06	16.95
Non-Elected Seats				
Non-District Seats	23	15	3	0
Overseas Seats	4	3	1	0
Total	123	70	11	21

* Including candidates of the Chienkuo Party, New United Nation Party, United Democrats and those who were not affiliated with any political party.

As shown in the table, the KMT won 123 seats compared to the 81 combined seats of the two opposition parties. A background

9. For analysis of the year 2000 presidential election and Chen's domestic policy, please refer to Wen-hui TSAI, "Social Order and a Welfare State: The Domestic Policies of the Chen Shui-bian Administration," *American Asian Review*, Vol. XIX, No. 1 (Spring 2000), pp. 1-25.

check of the newly elected members of the Legislative Yuan found that 19.11 percent were females, an improvement of 5.09 percent over the last term. The average age of these newly elected members was 48.44, including 13.78 percent under age 40, 10.67 percent over age 60, and 75.55 percent between age 40 and 59. In addition, 85.33 percent of these newly elected members had a college education or above, including 40.44 percent who have a postgraduate degree.¹⁰ Without any doubt, this was a highly educated group of legislators.

The biggest loser in the election of members of the Legislative Yuan was the New Party (NP hereafter). In the 1995 election, candidates from the NP received 12.95 percent of the votes and won 21 seats, which prompted political analysts to name the NP as the Third Party with enough seats to swing decisions on policies. But in the 1998 election, the NP candidates received only 7.06 percent of votes and saw its legislative seats reduced to only 11 seats. The result of this election combined with the poor showing of the NP's two mayoral candidates in that same election caused many to call it a "bubble party," meaning it is just like a bubble on the surface of water with no significant consequence to the movement of water.¹¹

When Mr. Chen won the Year 2000 presidential election, he faced the incredible task of attempting to push through legislation to advance his agendas. As the KMT clearly was in control of the Legislative Yuan and was in no mood to cooperate with the new President, they successfully sabotaged the new President's policy initiatives. The result was chaos. Several important pieces of legislation were blocked by the legislators and the country's economy took a serious downward spiral. As can be seen clearly in Table 3 below, Taiwan's economy shows a serious deterioration since Mr. Chen took office. Between 2000 and 2001, all the major indicators in Taiwan's economy showed a fast dive. During the first 8 months of 2001, Taiwan's export volume showed a decline of 16.7% compared to the year 2000; trade surplus dropped drastically; both GNP per capita and economic growth rate showed decline; and the unemployment rate soared to a twenty year high of 4.51 percent.

10. Available at <http://www.moi.gov.tw/w3/stat/topic313.html>, p. 4.

11. For a detailed analysis of the Year 1998 election result, please refer to Wen-hui TSAI, "On the Right Track: An Analysis of the December 1998 Elections in Taiwan," in Thomas J. Bellows, ed., *Taiwan and Mainland China: Democratization, Political Participation and Economic Development in the 1990s*, New York: Center of Asian Studies, St. John's University, 2000, pp.1-22.

TABLE 3. CHANGES IN ECONOMIC INDICATORS, 2000-2001

Economic Indicators	2000	2001
Unemployment Rate	2.99%	4.51%
Economic Growth Rate	5.86%	-0.37%
Trade Export (% compared with the preceding year)	20.4%	-16.7%
Trade Surplus (U.S. \$ billion)	8.4	0.5
GNP Per Capita (U.S. \$ thousand)	14.18	13.14

(Source: data taken from the internet website at <http://www.taiwanheadlines.com> under the special column of "One Year Rule of President Chen Shui-bian.")

Since the KMT was no longer running the government, it joined other political parties to blame Chen's new administration for the worsening of economic conditions in Taiwan. Rumors flew around that the major opposition parties which included the KMT, the People First Party newly organized by James Soong, and the New Party would collectively block Chen's DPP to gain more seats in the election of the new Legislative Yuan scheduled for December 1, 2001. The strategy was clear: the KMT and other opposition parties must block the DPP's effort from becoming the majority party in the legislature so that the oppositions may continue to undermine the new administration's effectiveness in governing.

III. THE EMERGENCE OF NEW POLITICAL OPPOSITIONS

After the DPP's CHEN Shui-bian won the Year 2000 presidential election, many KMT members were shocked by the lack of party leadership in their election campaigns. Two new political parties were formed out of the KMT: James Soong's People First Party and the Taiwan United Alliance.

1. The People First Party

The People First Party or Chinmintang (FPF hereafter) was formed immediately after the Year 2000 presidential election. The majority of its members are the older faction of the KMT who were the subordinates of CHIANG Kai-shek and CHIANG Ching-kuo and the New Party lawmakers. This group of older ex-KMT loyalists saw the defeat of the party in the Year 2000 president election as the beginning of the collapse of the once almighty party machine. They also sensed the end of political rule by a political leadership dominated by the mainlanders whose families migrated to Taiwan

along with CHIANG Kai-shek in 1949. Out of anger and frustration, they switched their allegiance to James Soong, a former aid to the late KMT Chairman CHIANG Ching-kuo and the KMT's Secretary General under LEE Teng-hui, who ran as an independent in the 2000 presidential election. Encouraged by a strong showing of voters' support and the backing of these older KMT loyalists, Soong announced the formation of a new party immediately after the election. He called the new party the People First Party, meaning it is a party that loves people. Soong said that the party would reflect "New Taiwanese" mainstream political values that call for peace in the Taiwan Strait, democracy, social justice and reconciliation between Taiwan's various ethnic groups.¹²

Several factors contributed to the newly-formed People First Party's emergence as a powerful third party, which is capable of challenging the ruling DPP and the leaderless old KMT. First, James Soong's narrow defeat in the Year 2000 presidential election made him a legitimate challenger to Chen. Soong had run as an independent candidate without any organizational support from a political machine but managed to stay extremely close to the eventual winner, Chen; Soong's voter share was only 3.5 percent behind Chen, or 313,345 votes. Many believed Soong might be one of the few political figures in Taiwan today capable of unseating Chen in the next presidential election that will be held in 2004. Second, Soong's charm and charisma have made him one of the most popular political figures in today's Taiwan. Soong had served under both the two Chiangs in the KMT party apparatus and was the first Taiwan provincial governor through a direct election. Soong has built a reputation of being close to people. Third, the diminishing role of the New Party in past elections has made Soong's PFP an ideal alternative in representing the integrity of the old KMT and the interest of mainlanders. When the NP was formed in 1996, it had a promising start as it aimed at the blocking of LEE Teng-hui's effort to increase the influence of Taiwan-born faction within the KMT. Unfortunately, the New Party was not successful. This was reflected in major defeats in several national and local elections during the 1990s. Soong attracted the New Party followers because he shared with them similar background and interest: a mainlander ethnic identity and a will to stop the erosion of the old KMT.

12. "Soong Launches People First Party," *Taiwan Headlines*, March 31, 2001, available at p. 1. Also see "Taiwan 2001 Elections," available at <http://www.gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/5-gp/election/major/major05.htm>.

2. Taiwan Solidarity Union

After months of severe criticism from the KMT leadership targeting at the former president, Mr. LEE Teng-hui, Lee's followers announced on August 14, 2001 the formation of a new party, the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU hereafter). Lee is hailed by the TSU as its spiritual leader. His attendance and speech at the founding ceremony on August 12, 2001 indicated that the objective of the TSU is to take over the former position of the KMT, when KMT was under Lee's leadership, and to speak on behalf of members of the localized camp who are relatively conservatives.

The founding of the TSU reflected a unique characteristic of voters in Taiwan who disagreed on the issue of cross-strait relations between China and Taiwan. On the right of the spectrum are those who support unification with China, while on the left are those who support Taiwan's independence. The former group is often labeled the "unification" faction, while the latter is often referred to as the "Taiwan Independence" faction. However, approximately 80 percent of voters in Taiwan today follow a moderate stand of claiming Taiwan's sovereignty without declaration of Taiwan independence. This middle of the road view is represented by the "localized" camp, a view former President LEE Teng-hui advocates. Under the leadership of Lee, the KMT had been able to absorb most of these moderate "localized" conservatives. When Lee was forced out of the top leadership of the KMT following the March 2000 presidential election, this group of moderate "localized" voters then made a clean break from the KMT and followed Lee to organize a new political party, the TSU. The focus of the TSU party platform is "Taiwan First." This new party favors the maintaining of the status quo, meaning no immediate unification with China and no Taiwan independence declaration; Taiwan's peace and prosperity takes priority over everything else. Lee's charisma is the greatest asset of this newly founded political party.¹³

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE LEGISLATIVE YUAN ELECTION OF YEAR 2001

The significance of the election of new members of the Legislative Yuan on December 1, 2001 was taken very seriously by all par-

13. For detail of the formation of the Taiwan Solitary Union, please refer to "Major Political Parties" section available at

ticipants.¹⁴ The KMT saw the election as the beginning of a return to power and the recovery of the presidential office it lost in the year 2000. The PFP hoped that the election would be the first step in positioning itself as a new major opposition party in Taiwan's political arena and will see the result of the election as an indication of Soong's appeal to voters for his planned candidacy in the next presidential election to be held in 2004. The ruling DPP needed the election to place more of its members into the legislature to allow its legislative proposals to sail through and to enable the new administration to rule the government effectively. The TSU and the NP both hoped to gain acceptance from the voters with a strong show. Thus, the stakes of the election were very high for each of these major participants.

A total of 584 candidates fought for the 225 seats in the Legislative Yuan. They included 434 candidates running for directly elected legislative seats, 21 candidates for the seats reserved for Taiwan aboriginals, 108 candidates for at-large seats and 21 candidates for seats chosen from overseas Taiwanese communities around the world. The 225 seats in the Legislative Yuan consisted of 176 seats from the direct election, and 49 at-large seats. The at-large seats, which included 8 for overseas Chinese, were based on proportional representation; parties were given at-large seats based on the percentage of votes their candidates received.

According to the Central Election Commission record, 15.82 million citizens were eligible to vote in the legislative elections on December 1, 2001. Polling stations were open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and votes were counted immediately after stations closed. A total of 10,327,855 voted on December 1, 2001. The voter participation rate was approximately 65.67 percent. Table 4 shows the number of ballots received by each participant's political party and its percentage share.

Judging from the ballots cast in the election, the DPP received nearly half a million votes (498,369) more than the KMT and had a 33.38 percent of the voter share. The DPP also led the emerging PFP by more than one and half million votes (1,529,904). Clearly, the DPP had a greater voter support than the KMT and the PFP. As shown in Table 4, the resulting vote distribution reflects that the DPP won 69 legislative seats through the direct election, the KMT

14. In addition to the election of the members of the Legislative Yuan, two other elections were held on the same day: the election of county magistrates and mayors and the election of the county and city commissioners.

TABLE 4. BALLOTS CAST AND PERCENTAGE OF PARTIES

Name of Parties*	Ballots Cast	Percent
Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)	3,447,740	33.38
Kuomintang (KMT)	2,949,371	28.56
People First party (PFP)	1,917,836	18.57
Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU)	801,560	7.76
New Party (NP)	269,620	2.61
Other Parties*	42,447	0.41
No Party Affiliation Candidates	899,054	8.71
Total	10,327,855	100.00

*Other parties include the Chinese Taiwan Aborigine Democratic Party, the Nationwide, Democratic Nonpartisan Union, the Green Party, the Taiwan Independence Party, the Great Chinese Battle Line of Unification, and the Wisdom Action Party.

(Source: Tabulation is posted on the eTaiwan News website, at <http://www.etaiwannews.com>, December 1, 2001.)

53 seats, the PFP 35 seats, the TSU 8 seats, and the NP 1 seat. Those candidates who have no party affiliation collectively received 8.7 percent of votes. When the at-large seats were taken into account, according to the Central Election Commission, the ruling DPP won 87 seats in the new Legislative Yuan; that accounted for 38.67 percent of the total seats. The KMT won 68 seats or 30.22 percent, the PFP 46 seats or 20.44 percent, and the TSU won 13 seats or 5.78 percent. Table 5 lists the number of seats won by each political party, the number of total seats and each party's percentage in the new Legislative Yuan.

The number of seats won by the DPP candidates thus made the DPP the largest party in the new Legislative Yuan. In comparison with the last election, the DPP showed a net gain of 35 seats. The number of KMT's seats in the Legislative Yuan decreased from 123 to 68, a loss of 55 seats. Soong's PFP had a strong showing in its first election participation, so did LEE Teng-hui's TSU which landed 13 seats. The biggest loser was the New Party, landing only one seat or six seats fewer than in the last election. Election observers in Taiwan now see the emergence of a new political landscape of "two large parties (DPP and KMT), one medium party (PFP), and one small party (TSU)."¹⁵ Table 6 compares the election results between 1998 and 2001.

15. Available at December 1, 2001.

**TABLE 5. STATISTICAL DISTRIBUTION OF
LEGISLATOR ELECTEES**

Name of Parties*	Seats Won in Election	Total Seats	% of Seat
Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)	69	87	38.67
Kuomintang (KMT)	53	68	30.22
People First party (PFP)	35	46	20.44
Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU)	8	13	5.79
New Party (NP)	1	1	0.44
Taiwan No.1	1	1	0.44
No Party Affiliation Candidates	9	9	4.00
Total	176	225**	100.00

* The following parties did not land any seat in the election. They are the Chinese Taiwan Aborigine Party, the Nationwide Democratic Nonpartisan Union, the Green Party, the Taiwan Independence Party, the Great Chinese Battle Line of Unification, and the Wisdom Action Party.

** Including the 49 at-large seats that are distributed according to the voter shares. (Source: Central Election Commission website, at <http://cec90.gov.tw>, December 1, 2002.)

During the 1998 election for the Legislative Yuan members, the NP was the third largest political party in Taiwan and it was able to draw 7.06 percent of voters resulting in the placement of 11 of its

TABLE 6. ELECTION RESULTS IN 1998 AND 2001

Name of Parties	1998		2001	
	% of Votes	# of Seats	% of Votes	# of Seats
KMT	46.43%	123	28.56%	68
DPP	29.56%	70	33.38%	87
NP	7.06%	11	2.61%	1
PFP	—	—	18.57%	46
TSU	—	—	7.76%	13
Others*	16.95%	21	9.12%	9

* Including all other political parties and those without a political party affiliation. (Source: Based on the tabulation from Table 2 and Table 4.)

candidates to the Legislative Yuan. However, in the year 2001 election, the support for the NP showed a dramatic decline as the party only received 2.61 percent of votes and won only one single seat, Kinmen County. The decline of the NP in Taiwan's political arena was caused by at least three factors. First, voters in Taiwan in general saw the NP as a Pro-China party and its call for reunification with China was rejected by the majority of people in Taiwan. Sec-

ond, the NP party membership overlapped with the newly founded PFP, for both parties were created by former KMT members. The result was that many of the NP members shifted their support to PFP. Third, The center of the NP leadership consisted of a group of former KMT officials who were the enemies of Mr. LEE Teng-hui. Their main mission since the founding of the party in 1993 had been to destroy Mr. Lee. In the year 2001, however, the NP lost its enemy target because Mr. Lee had left the KMT Chairmanship and consequently, the NP seemed to become aimless. It is thus safe to say the NP is finished after the extremely poor showing of this year 2001 election. As a larger 'anti-Lee' organization, the PFP easily took over the territory that the New Party had occupied. Over ten New Party members holding public office, including former New Party national congress convener LEE Ching-hua, threw their hats in with Soong. One-time comrades turned out to be fatal competitors, absorbing almost all the New Party voters. One election observer commented that "from the moment it held high the 'anti-Lee' banner, the New Party was destined to complete its temporary mission, and walk into history along with LEE Teng-hui."¹⁶

Nevertheless, the NP's loss was relatively insignificant in comparison to the loss by the KMT in Taiwan's large political arena. Once mighty KMT is now a minority party in the legislature. LIEN Chan, the party chairman, suffered a second defeat at the hand of the DPP. During the 1998 term of the Legislative Yuan, the KMT controlled the legislature; KMT members occupied 123 out of a total of 225 seats in the Legislative Yuan, or 57.21 percent of the seats, a large enough percentage to undermine the new president's policy initiatives. Indeed, the KMT-controlled Legislative Yuan had been quite successful in crippling the new administration under Chen and the DPP. Political instability and constitutional crisis were created out of the constant power struggle between the KMT-controlled Legislative Yuan and the DPP-led new administration ever since Chen took the presidential office in May 2000. The goal of the KMT in the year 2001 election was to maintain its dominance in the Legislative Yuan by winning majority of the seats. Unfortunately, the KMT not only failed to win half of the seats in this new election but also fell behind the DPP. Although the KMT is still the largest opposition party in the Legislative Yuan, it will no

16. "New Party Crumbles, Clings to Kinmen," *Taiwan Headlines*, December 2, 2001, p. 1, also available at <http://www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw/20011202>.

longer be able to effectively manipulate legislation like it used to do.

With the defeat, the KMT leadership is now facing a challenge from within. Mr. LIEN Chan is being held responsible for the defeat. In the Year 2000 presidential election, Mr. Lien lost the election to Mr. Chen and now the party under his leadership again lost to Chen's DPP. Lien's leadership is being questioned. Already, there have been numerous suggestions calling for Lien's resignation as the party chairman. MA Ying-jeou, the popular current mayor of the city of Taipei, is being considered to replace Lien as a leader of the KMT to rebuild its old glory.

If we examine the election result carefully, we may find that the combined seats won by candidates from the PFP and the TSU were 59 and the seats the KMT lost were 55. It is reasonable to suspect that the KMT's lost seats were taken by the PFP and the TSU. If the KMT is going to recover from this defeat in the next election, it must win back supporters of the PFP and the TSU. In Taiwan's current political atmosphere, the chance for the KMT and the PFP to cooperate is much greater than the possibility of cooperation between the KMT and the TSU. In the next election, if members of the PFP could rejoin the KMT or if the two parties form a political alliance, they could pose a great threat to the DPP.

The election history in Taiwan shows that the support for the DPP has been remarkably stable. In the four elections for members of the Legislative Yuan since 1992, the vote shares have been constantly around the thirty percent mark, ranging from 29.56 percent in 1998 to 36.09 percent in 1992. If we take into account all of the major elections, the DPP candidates have not won half of the votes, although it did do better in elections of the local and regional mayorships. Table 7 shows a comparison of vote shares between the KMT and the DPP in major elections in Taiwan since 1989. It shows the decline of the KMT and the relative stability of the DPP.

The DPP did experience a minor setback in its attempt to dominate the local politics. Along with the election of the Legislative Yuan, the election of the county magistrates and city mayors was also held on December 1, 2001.¹⁷ As Table 8 shows, both the KMT and the DPP had an equal number of wins with 9 each. The PFP won 2 localities, the NP 1 and the non-party winners also won 2. The setback was minor because the DPP still won the most votes,

17. For a detailed report on local elections, please refer to Jim HWANG, "Political 'Parents'," *Taipei Review*, March 2002, pp. 10-15.

**TABLE 7. A COMPARISON OF VOTES BETWEEN KMT
AND DPP IN MAJOR ELECTIONS SINCE 1989**

Elections	KMT	DPP
1989 County/City Mayors	60.83%	28.29%
1991 National Assembly	71.20%	23.90%
1992 Legislative Yuan	61.67%	36.09%
1993 County/City Mayors	47.32%	41.15%
1994 Governor/Mayors of Taipei and Kaohsiung	45.50%	40.56%
1994 City/County Assemblymen	51.03%	32.54%
1995 Legislative Yuan	49.91%	35.95%
1996 National Assembly	49.68%	29.85%
1996 ROC President	54.00%	21.13%
1997 County/City Mayors	43.32%	42.12%
1998 Legislative Yuan	46.43%	29.56%
2000 ROC President	23.10%	39.30%
2001 Legislative Yuan	28.56%	33.38%

(Source: *Chu-you Shih-pao*, December 6, 1999, p. 4; Wen-hui TSAI, "On the Right Track: An Analysis of the December 1998 Elections in Taiwan," in *Taiwan and Mainland China*, ed. by Thomas Bellows, New York: Center for Asian Studies, St. John's University Press, 2000, p. 21; Wen-hui TSAI, "Regional Variations in Taiwan's Presidential Election and Policy Implications," *American Journal of Chinese Studies*, Vol. VII, No. 1, 2000, p. 30.)

showing that it has grass-root support. Table 8 compares the results between the 1997 and 2001 elections.

**TABLE 8. COMPARATIVE ELECTION RESULTS IN 1997
AND 2001 FOR COUNTY MAGISTRATES AND
CITY MAYORS**

Name of the Parties	1997		2001	
	# of Seats	% of Votes	# of Seats	% of Votes
KMT	8	42.12	9	35.15
DPP	12	43.32	9	45.27
NP	0	1.42	1	0.17
PFP	B	B	2	2.36
TSU	B	B	0	0
Others	3	13.14	2	17.05

(Source: Data taken from the Central Election Commission and the *United Daily News* post on December 2, 2001.)

Although the DPP did lose 3 seats in the election of the county magistrates and city mayors, in comparison to the 1997 election, its vote share increased from 43.32 percent in 1997 to 45.27 percent in

2001. The discrepancy was created by the fact that the DPP won more in large populated counties and cities. The KMT's vote share declined from 42.12 percent in 1997 to 35.15 percent in 2001. Overall, thus, DPP's loss in the county and city offices was relatively insignificant.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS: POLITICAL PLURALISM AND EFFECT ON TAIWAN-CHINA RELATIONS

1. Political Pluralism

In March 2000, the KMT lost the presidential election, which made the DPP's CHEN Shui-bian the first non-KMT president of the Republic of China on Taiwan. On December 1, 2001, the KMT lost to the DPP again in the election of the Legislative Yuan making the DPP the largest party in the legislative body of the government. These two losses effectively broke the once-mighty KMT's five-decade grip on Taiwan's politics. Mr. Frank Hsieh, the DPP Chairman, proclaimed after the election, "We have officially become the largest party in the legislature. This is a big step toward becoming a mature democracy."¹⁸

In both elections, the DPP won not by gaining more votes; its voter's share remained constant with no significant growth. The DPP won because of the internal fights within the KMT camp. Competing factions have long existed in the KMT. Both CHIANG Kai-shek and CHIANG Ching-kuo allowed the existence of factions within the KMT to check and balance each other's power under the authoritarian watchful eyes of the two Chiangs. In the post-Chiang era, however, internal factional conflicts among competing camps caused the breakup of the KMT party. The key members of the New Party and the People First Party are all former KMT members. Their defection has made the KMT much weaker that resulted in humiliating defeats in the past two elections: the 2000 presidential election and the 2001 Legislative Yuan election.

Immediately after the election, President Chen called for cooperation between the ruling party and all other opposition parties. Chen said, "The end of this election marks the beginning of an era of cooperation."¹⁹ He reiterated his desire to create a coalition government that will end the political feuding which was evident ever since he took over the presidency. Chen's inexperienced mi-

18. Quoted in Associated Press news report published in *The Journal Gazette*, Fort Wayne, Indiana, December 2, 2001, p. 16A.

19. *Id.*

nority government has struggled to cope with a slumping economy and unruly legislature headed by the powerful KMT-led opposition that refused to cooperate with him. Voters all realized Chen's difficulties and came out to support his party hoping to end the stand-off. One voter was quoted in a news story, "We elected Chen as the president, and I think we should support his party and give him a chance to run the country."²⁰

The voters seem to be confident that the political and economic situation in Taiwan after the election will be better. A post-election internet poll conducted by the influential *Chinatimes* newspaper on December 3 shows that more than half of the respondents believe the situation will be better as a result of the election, and only 24 percent said both political and economic conditions would turn worse. Table 9 gives a detailed poll result.

TABLE 9. "WILL TAIWAN'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION BE BETTER OR WORSE AFTER THE ELECTION?"

Both will be better	61.5%
Better political, worse economy	6.5%
Worse political, better economy	2.1%
Both will be worse	24.0%
None of the above	0.4%
Hard to predict	5.4%
Total polled: 3685 persons	

(Source: <http://www.chinatimes.com>, December 4, 2001.)

It is clear that the majority of those who cast their votes on the above internet survey are very positive about the future of Taiwan after the election. They are confident that the Chen administration will be able to improve the political and economic situations with a stronger support in the Legislative Yuan.²¹

20. *Id.*

21. The confidence on the new legislature and Chen's administration was reflected by the growth of Taiwan's stock market immediately after the election. As of December 7, 2001, Taiwan's stock market index shows a continuous growth for 6 days. Taiwan shares closed on Wednesday, December 5 at their highest level in more than five months. The benchmark index of the Taiwan Stock Exchange finished up 158.13 points, or 3.32 percent, to 4924.56, the highest close since June 21. Advancers outnumbered decliners 387 to 170, while 87 issues remained unchanged in dealings valued at NT\$174.84 billion, the biggest turnover for a session this year. By the end of the week, Taiwan's stocks' market value increased NT1.63 trillion, or US\$47.24 billion. For de-

What can be expected from the Chen administration in working with this new DPP-led Legislative Yuan? Chen's call for cooperation among major political parties and his announced intention to form a coalition cabinet are seen as a necessary first step toward the building of a peaceful working relation with the legislature. Although Chen's DPP is now the largest party in the Legislative Yuan, it does not have the majority seats to pass any bill singlehandedly; it needs support from other non-DPP legislative members. The KMT chairman, LIEN Chan, already indicated his party will not work with Chen and will continue the fight his party has with Chen and the DPP. As a consequence, cooperation between the DPP and the KMT collectively must be ruled out. Instead, Chen and the DPP may work with individual members of the KMT in order to win them over for support on specific issues.

Chen and the DPP cannot count on the help from Soong's PFP members in the Legislative Yuan either. On the one hand, Soong's pro-China ideology is contrary to Chen's Pro-Taiwan stand and on the other hand Chen sees Soong as a strong challenger in the next presidential election and certainly would not help Soong by upgrading Soong's popular image and reputation. Although the PFP does not have the votes to block Chen's policy initiatives, its members have a stronger comradeship than the KMT; the PFP will probably be more troublesome to Chen in the Legislative Yuan than the KMT.

The most likely candidates to collaborate with Chen and the DPP on the other hand seem to be members of LEE Teng-hui's TSU legislators, the TSU. Lee and Chen share many ideas on the running of the government. In particular, they are both anti-mainland and are deeply involved in the rebuilding of a new Taiwan identity for the residents of Taiwan. Thus, Chen should be able to win support from TSU legislators on issues related to cross-strait relations and national security in Taiwan.

To work with the non-DPP members in the Legislative Yuan is a must for Chen if his administration is going to effectively run the government. Chen proposed to create a "stabilization alliance," a cross-party alliance for national stabilization to form strategic partnerships with opposition parties. CHEN Chi-mai, a top DPP official, said "once the president's cross-party alliance for national stabilization is put in place, leaders of all participating parties would

tails, please see report in *Chinatimes* webpage at <http://www.chinatimes.com> and government report at <http://www.taiwanheadlines.gov.tw>.

meet on a regular basis to work on their consensus for important bills to be passed into laws in the Legislative Yuan."²² Now that the DPP has become the largest party in the Legislative Yuan, the job will be easier than it was in the past. The wisdom of Chen and the DPP leadership will be crucial in determining the working relationship among all major parties in the Legislative Yuan.

Indeed, this definitely is the maturation of democracy in Taiwan, marked by a political pluralism.²³ The center of political power in the Republic of China on Taiwan has clearly shifted from the hands of the mainlander controlled KMT to the Taiwanese under the banner of the DPP. Taiwan is one of very few nations in the world today that has successfully transformed its polity from authoritarianism to democracy without bloodshed. This is quite an accomplishment, indeed.

2. Effects on Future Taiwan-China Relations

During the presidential election campaign in 2000, Chinese leaders in Beijing publicly announced that the DPP candidate, CHEN Shui-bian, was unacceptable to them. Major television stations in Taiwan broadcasted a press conference of Chinese Premier ZHU Rongji issuing a strong warning to Taiwan's voters not to vote for Chen. The warning from Zhu angered many Taiwanese votes. Chen was elected.

In his inaugural speech, President Chen pledged that as long as the PRC does not use force against Taiwan, he would not declare Taiwan independence, change the title of the current ROC government, incorporate former President LEE Teng-hui's "state-to-state" policy through constitutional amendment, push for a referendum to determine Taiwan's future, and abolish the National Unification Guidelines and Unification Council. Despite these seemingly conciliatory gestures, however, Beijing refused to resume contact with Taipei for Chen's refusal to accept PRC's "one China" principle.

Contrary to what Beijing did during the 2000 presidential election, in the 2001 legislative election, Beijing was almost completely silent even though the Chinese leaders were reportedly angered by

22. "Chen's Proposed Alliance One Step Closer to Reality," *The China Post*, December 10, 2001, also available at <http://www.taiwanheadlines.com>.

23. For discussion on the future of Taiwan, please refer to Wen-hui TSAI, *Socio-Economic Changes and Modernization in an Age of Uncertainty: Taiwan in the 1990s and Its Future Challenge*, Baltimore: Maryland Series in Contemporary Asian Studies, University of Maryland School of Law, 2001.

President CHEN Shui-bian's electioneering during which Chen explained to Taiwan's voters why he rejected the "one China" policy.

Without reliable empirical data, one should not interpret DPP's electoral victory as a setback for Beijing's Taiwan policy. However, Chinese leaders must face a new political reality in Taiwan: the DPP is now the largest political party in Taiwan's legislature. Beijing must adjust its Taiwan policy to reflect this new change.

Obviously, to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, leaders of Taipei and Beijing will have to exhibit more wisdom and patience and work out some kind of *modus Vivendi* in order to create more favorable climate for resuming dialogues and increasing exchanges. For the PRC, it is highly unlikely that Beijing will ever publicly renounce the use of force against Taiwan or change its position on the "one China" policy. However, in order to show its goodwill toward Taiwan, Beijing must resume contact and dialogues with Chen's government without pre-conditions. It must also show some flexibility in allowing Taiwan to participate more in international affairs. For Taiwan, it must maintain a delicate balance between promoting Taiwan's international status and provoking Beijing by attempting to create "two Chinas" or "one China one Taiwan." The blossom of political pluralism and the institutionalization of democracy in Taiwan will also make secret deals between Taiwan and the PRC unlikely to succeed. The will of the people in Taiwan cannot be taken lightly.

Although Chen's administration still faces an uphill battle to govern, the December 2001 legislative election clearly demonstrated that people were tired of combatant fight between the administration and the law making body of the Legislative Yuan. After the election, a common consensus began to emerge that calls for all political parties to work together to rebuild Taiwan's economy to its old glory. Pat GAO had the following observation:

Although, as expected, the balloting ended with no party gaining a majority, of the 225 seats, the governing Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) emerged for the first time as the largest single party in the body, holding eighty-seven seats. With another thirteen seats in the hands of the newly formed Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU), which is considered sympathetic to the DPP's legislative agenda, and with some other lawmakers reportedly prepared to back an informal coalition with those two parties, the administration of President CHEN Shui-bian appears likely

to face a far more accommodating environment in the Fifth Legislative Yuan than in the contentious predecessor.²⁴

If Gao's observation is correct, then there is really reason to cheer. The "Taiwan First" principle will be the first priority taken by all parties concerned. Economic recovery will thus be the focus of the government attention while "complicated and controversial" (President Chen's words) political proposals have to be put aside. Through democratic elections, Taiwan is moving ahead in promoting and building a pluralist modernized nation.

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GLOSSARY

Selected Chinese Names and Terms

Chen, Chi-mai	陳其邁	Ma, Ying-jeou	馬英九
Chen, Shui-bian	陳水扁	National Unification Guidelines	國統綱領
Chiang, Ching-kuo	蔣經國	New Party	新黨
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